THE NEWS BULLETIN

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF CANADA

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THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS WERE CONCEIVED AND BORN AND HAVE HAD THEIR MARVELLOUS GROWTH THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IN THE MOST DEEPLY FELT NEEDS OF YOUTH

I. William Pidgeon

From the early days until now the motivating purpose of Association programs of activity has been to help youth to deal with their interests, problems and needs so as to find fuller, richer, more abundant life in the day in which they lived. This purpose has been concerned with individual persons. There have been foreseen and unforeseen by-products such as better understandings, attitudes and relationships between individuals of differing belief and social station and race. But the main aim has been to help individuals, leaving them to make their own impact as Christians on the world in which they live.

The last few years have seen this purpose intensified or at any rate become more intelligent. The need and opportunity for personal counselling is generally realized, and methods are being employed that are more carefully "personality respecting" than ever before. At the same time the Association Movement has been becoming more sharply aware of the needs of organized society and increasingly concerned with applying the principles of Jesus to social problems.

These two concerns—with individuals and for society—converged and were focussed in statements of purpose made by the International Convention of North American Associations and by the World Assembly which met in Cleveland, Ohio, last August. Declarations were made that "the Associations are a world-wide fellowship united in common loyalty to Jesus Christ for the purpose of developing Christian persons and a Christian society", and (in effect) that we call upon youth to live, speak and strive to make the law of love revealed by Jesus supreme in all human affairs. The term "Christian society" was interpreted. It was interpreted in general statements such as that which, in referring to unsatisfactory relations between races and cultures, affirmed that "patience without effort toward improvement is unchristian", and, in reference to unsocial conditions in the production and distribution of the necessities of existence, that "nothing less is needed than a fundamental change in the spirit of our economic life which will substitute cooperation for the common good in place of unrestricted competition for private gain". Detailed recommendations also were made (as, for instance, regarding hours and conditions of labour in industry), which would put into practice the principles enunciated and exemplified by the timeless Galilean.

In thus attempting to influence both individuals and society in the direction of Christian ways of life the Associations engage in an enterprise as great as life itself and as varied in its manifestations. It is the world's greatest project in religious education. In it we work alongside the church and all good men of all time. For it we can call upon the unlimited resources of the eternal spirit of love and goodwill.

There are resources of human knowledge, experience and skill too. What are the processes of education? How does religious education work; what are its methods? To know and to use these methods is to add human cooperation to God's laws, to be co-workers with Him for the redemption of humanity.

It seems clear that three methods or means must be used. These means are interdependent and inseparable, and they are ineffective by themselves. Yet, under varying circumstances, each demands its own emphasis and has it own value. These three elements in religious education are inspiration, information, and action. Any organization seeking to help youth must realize the importance of, and make use of, facts, knowledge, truth, by imparting information, or pointing out the need of it and making it accessible. There is a very important place in Association programs for instruction. This, sometimes, has been forgotten in the recent enthusiasm for another necessary emphasis. But great knowledge with low motive certainly is not to be desired. Emotions must be inspired by compelling purposes, by high aims, social ideals, enriching desires, and friendly attitudes. And these two, inspiration and instruction, can only be effective when they are learned through, and related to, action (experience is the best teacher), and when they find expression in actual living. To know, to care, to do, these are the basic elements of a good life.

All this is clear enough for working with individual persons; it is a trinity based on well known laws of learning. The Associations however, today are faced also with other questions not so easily answered. What are the basic elements of a good social order? How should these elements work through the institutions and customs of our common life? By what processes is society educated; how does society learn? And how can the Associations best work for the attainment of a good—a Christian—society?

The spread of truth, the firing of the spirit and their interpretation and expression in all living, both individual and social, is the challenge and the task of the Young Men's Christian Associations. This involves the will to discover or devise effective activities and methods of conducting them.

II.

In the reorganization of committee and staff responsibilities approved by the Annual Meeting of the National Council, a committee was designated for program service and a secretary attached to it. On this Program Service Committee falls the request of the Annual Meeting to develop standards of excellence for judging local programs of activity. The nucleus of the Committee has been appointed, and has held several meetings and surveyed its task.

Two things became apparent immediately: First: To devise ways of measuring the excellence of separate activities without considering the total program of which they might be a part, would be quite inadequate; the total program itself must be viewed in the light of its value as means to the attainment of our two-fold purpose—Christian persons and a Christian society. This involves the determination of what an all-round Association program (or curriculum) should include. Second: A national program service committee can collect, summarize, interpret, and submit, information, desires and experiences, and so render extremely valuable, even indispensable service, but it cannot manufacture either a useful all-round program, or tests for separate activities, out of its own inner consciousness. The development of Association program for the new day is a task for the whole Canadian Movement, one that requires the participation and cooperation of every local Association.

III.

An analysis was made of present-day programs of education and religious education used by local Associations and by other organizations. Twenty-four curricula of education and religious education and outlines of forum or discussion club programs were analyzed. They included both local Canadian Association programs and other notable lists, such as those used or recommended by the International Council of Religious Education, the International Survey of the YMCA, United States Bureau of Education, and prominent educationists.

An all-round curriculum of religious education intended to develop Christian persons and a Christian society should include certain aspects. In the order of the number of times they were specifically mentioned under various descriptions in the twenty-four curricula or outlines which were studied, these are: Work, Citizenship, Family and Sex, Health, Recreation, Religion, or Philosophy of Life.

Taking these main areas of concern as the core or basis of program, the next step is to find appropriate activities related to the interests, problems and needs of persons and society in these areas and to promote these activities.

The Program Service Committee offers one such list of activities. What do you think of it?

TO DEVELOP CHRISTIAN PERSONS AND A CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

Some aspects of the main areas of concern in curricula

As directed toward persons	As directed toward Society
WORK	
Vocational counselling	Employment and unemployment
Self knowledge	Motives and practices in industry
Attitudes toward work	Working conditions
Knowledge of occupations	Effect of mechanization
Vocational education	
Vocational placement	
CITIZENSHIP	
Knowledge of organized society	Cooperation in community, provincial, national and international enterprises
Knowledge of problems of modern life	Development of public opinion
Concern for value of personality and personal rights	Promotion of goodwill and good relationships, international, intercultural, etc.
Citizenship obligations	

FAMILY AND SEX

Home relationships and responsibilities
Sex Hygiene
Relationship to other sex
Education for marriage
Voluntary parenthood
Parenthood education
Housing
Social opportunities for youth

HEALTH

Physical
  Knowledge of health, diet, sleep
  First Aid
  Selecting medical advice
Mental
  Wholesome mental habits
  Spiritual unity
  Emotional stability
Community health services;
  Free clinics,—medical, dental, psychical, etc.
Preventive public health;
  Food supply, etc.
Cost of hospitals
Liquor and drug traffic

RECREATION

(a) Releases
Sport and athletics
Participation in informal social recreations
Appreciations of music, art, etc.
Travel
(b) Avocations
Creative self-expression
Development of skill in serious, worthwhile hobbies, manual dexterities, music, dramatics, science, art, nature study, etc.
Encouragement of community appreciation of music, art, drama, literature, etc.
Community and national festivals
Lyceums, fairs, hobby shows, orchestras, choirs, etc.
Playgrounds
Parks
Art centres

RELIGION, OR PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Personal spiritual life
Study of Jesus
Meaning of life
Relation to God and man
Cooperation with the church and other constructive social agencies for moral and social improvement
Appropriate forms of worship, and social expression of highest value.

IV.

It is hoped that local staff and lay groups will bcome interested in working out comprehensive policies and plans for program to meet the conditions of the present day and look forward to the future.

Such a program study group as here suggested might consider the whole program of its Association, or might pay special attention to the development of effective activities in any one of the main areas of concern.

Only as local groups study, try out, and report, can a national program service committee fulfil its function on behalf of the Canadian Movement.

LOCAL ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL CAMPAIGNS

Judged by the responsiveness of business people to Y.M.C.A. appeals for maintenance funds in more than fifteen Canadian centres during the past three months, the services of the Associations are definitely regarded as of fundamental community importance.

Notwithstanding the existing economic conditions which are universal in all of our cities, although the degree of financial difficulty varies at different points, the canvasses have on the whole been very encouraging indeed, and at some places there have been some amazing results

Objectives which in practically every case have been set at a lower figure than in other years, based on budgets that have been reduced to a minimum, have not always been reached, but in the majority of instances have exceeded the amounts secured in the preceding year. Achievements of this kind are really wonderful in the light of the present business situation, and Association leaders have every reason to be heartened by the results.

The places which have completed their campaigns since the first of the year, to May 15th, are as follows, with the latest known figures:

Halifax	$ 11,300
Hamilton	19,000
Kingston	6,100
Kitchener	15,000
Montreal	71,000
New Westminster	6,000
Niagara Falls	2,550
Ottawa	13,000
Saint John	8,500
St. Thomas	2,000
Sherbrooke	3,700
Stratford	3,500
Toronto	100,000
Victoria	5,000
Windsor	24,000

During the last half of May the Associations at Galt, Peterborough, St. Catharines, and Charlottetown are conducting campaigns.

CAMP LEADERS' TRAINING COURSE

For a number of years the various Toronto Associations have united to conduct preparatory training courses for camp leaders. Each spring a school is held consisting of seven full evening sessions. A registration fee is charged which covers the cost of the opening banquet and the loose-leaf folders and materials such as outlines and notes issued the students. The course is very popular with the highest grade potential and experienced leaders, the numbers having grown year by year. This spring, in spite of difficulties, the enrolment has exceeded the estimate by over twenty-five percent and totals 135.

The opening banquet held each year in a quaint old inn just outside the city is chiefly inspirational. The program consisting of camp songs, camp stunts, a general outline of the course, and an address on the significance and opportunities of camp leadership.

The regular weekly sessions are divided into three periods. The first three quarters of an hour students from the five cooperating camps meet separately to discuss "The Mechanics of Camping". Here such things as schedules, order of the day, equipment, etc., are discussed as they relate to their particular camp.

Then comes a brief period when the whole institute meets for instruction in camp songs. It is believed that if the leaders know and can interpret a wide range of songs they are much more readily learned by the boys and more greatly enjoyed.

The final hour and a quarter is devoted to "Practicum Periods". These provide actual instruction in the activities listed. Leaders taking these courses have patterns, materials, and get practice in learning how to teach the particular craft at camp.

Dramatics and Camp Fire Programs—Stunts, Rainy day programs, Camp Fire stories, etc. Leathercraft—Simple things that can be made with inexpensive leather costing only a few cents. Nature Study—A study of ways of making nature study interesting to campers. Indian Lore—Simple Indian ceremonies, making head bands, Indian dances, etc. Woodworking—Chiefly whittling, boat building, bird house building and fretwork. Actual practice in these crafts and a wide range of patterns for use at camp. Campcraft—How to prepare for an overnight hike, simple camp cooking, care of feet, use of a canoe on longer trips, etc. Discussion of principles of leadership—Discussion of situations the leader faces at camp as a leader of boys. Advanced Course —a seminar for those leaders of more mature experience.

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

A Kitchener-Waterloo group of Association laymen and secretaries made an observation trip to the S. C. Johnson Company, of Brantford. Excerpts from their report tell an interesting story.

"Ten of us went on the visit. We went to ask questions about everything to do with the manufacture of the product but were chiefly interested in their method of government.

"We were given the opportunity of speaking to any factory worker. One man to whom I spoke had been in the factory for nearly twelve years. He said that the working conditions were far finer than any he had ever hoped to experience. He is financially "well fixed" and this not through stinting but through having laid by a certain percentage of his salary. He feels that he is part of a great industrial force—a vital part of it—and knows from experience that "in union there is strength". He owns nine shares of stock (no one who is not employed by the company can own any company stock), which are valued now at $1,800. He has been unaffected as have they all, by the economic depression. What's more, this scheme was not devised either as a means of counteracting the results of such a time as this or to take care of the business during hard times. It was thought [illegible] by Mr. L. M. Croft the managing director, a [illegible] has been carried through by him. He gives credit to Mr. Herbert Johnson (deceased) whose friend he was for having had the desire to do something different to the idea of a "dole" for such workers as are now the personnel of this company.

"Among the first things we noticed were some melted snowmen. Now children are generally the makers of snowmen. Here's the story though in this case. One afternoon Mr. Croft offered prizes for the best snowman that would be made by the factory workers and office staff. Accordingly a judging committee was formed and everyone went to work on snowman-building. That means that factory work stops, of course. Foolish? They don't think so.

"One official said that on a summer's afternoon, especially if it's real hot, you may see the whole gang out in front of the factory playing tennis or golf or sitting around in chairs and later on enjoying ice-cream made by the girls in their own kitchen. When it's cool they work again. Overtime? Yes, of course, but there is no money paid for overtime and there never has been. More than that, each office worker is able to help out in the factory when an extra rush is on. You see, it's everyone's responsibility to see that production is carried on. For instance, a good customer orders a large quantity of goods and there is not enough on hand for the stock on hand is kept at a minimum. Everyone works at full steam then to fill this special order for the customer.

"They have no seasonal trade; they level off their peaks and raise their valleys; instead of hiring extra men, for increased production they all work harder. They know that it is a much better policy to have one man who works efficiently than three who are novices.

"The results of this enterprise may be summed up as follows: they own their own business; they can't be fired by the boss; they get ten percent stock dividends; they get wages ten to fifty percent higher than anyone else in the same kind of business; they have free insurance; they have no fear of unemployment; their business is growing all the time."